

REMARKS

Claims 1-20 are pending in the application. According to the Office Action Summary, claims 1, 4-14 and 16-20 are rejected, and claims 2, 3 and 15 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. However, the Examiner's written analysis rejects claim 2 and objects to claim 4. Clarification of this discrepancy is respectfully requested. Also, claim 15 has been objected to whereas claim 16, which depends from claim 15, has been rejected. Applicant respectfully submits that in view of the Examiner's objection to claim 15 that claim 16 should also be objected to rather than rejected. Clarification as to the status of claim 16 is also respectfully requested.

Notwithstanding the above-noted discrepancies, applicant has rewritten claims 3 and 15 to include all the limitations of the base claims and any intervening claims and added them to the application as claims 21 and 23, respectively. Claims 4 and 16 have been rewritten as claims 22 and 24 as depending claims from respective claims 21 and 23. Applicant respectfully submits that these claims are therefore in condition for allowance.

Applicant has also amended claims 1, 4-8, 10, 17 and 20 to more clearly define the invention and respectfully submits that these claims are not anticipated by either Cheng-Tien or Beretta and are therefore in condition for allowance. Specifically, claim 1 has been amended to clarify that the means for bearing a load includes at least one hook having an open end affixed to at least one of the support members where the hook is adapted to resist movement of the at least one support member in a direction caused by a load when an object is placed in the container. Amended claim 1 further recites that the at least one hook

receives a respective one of the at least one support member when the container is in the extended configuration. The hooks 26a and 26b of Cheng-Tien do not receive a respective support member but rather engage a peripheral loop 23 formed as part of the base member 12. The hooks 17 disclosed in Beretta are designed to bear the weight of a respective side panel when locked in place.

Applicant respectfully traverses the Examiner's rejection of claims 11-14 as being anticipated by Cheng-Tien and claims 17-20 as being anticipated by Beretta. Claim 11 recites in part that at least one of the support members engages the at least one hook when the load is exerted on the plurality of support members. Clearly, none of the support members 24 disclosed in Cheng-Tien engage a hook 26a or 26b when a load is exerted within the container. Instead, the hooks 26a and 26b engage the peripheral loops 23 that are formed as part of the base member 12. Further, claims 17 and 20 have been amended to more clearly define the invention. In particular, amended claim 17, which depends from claim 11, recites that the substantially planar back plate is adapted to be mounted to a flat surface, such as a wall. The structure disclosed in Beretta is clearly not adapted to be mounted to a flat surface but is instead designed to stand on a floor on four legs. Claim 20, which depends from claim 11, has been amended to recite that the base member is rectangular and that the collapsible container forms a substantially rectangular box when in the extended configuration.

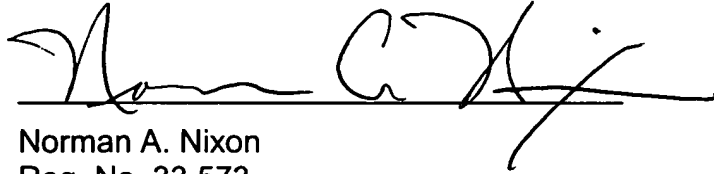
Claims 2 and 3 have been cancelled without traverse. The applicant reserves all rights to pursue allowance of the cancelled claims in any related patent application.

In view of the above, applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the application and allowance of claims 1 and 4-24.

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Applicant's attorney invites the Examiner for a direct telephone conference at the number below, if necessary, to discuss the merits or other aspects of this application and to move it expeditiously to allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Norman A. Nixon', is written over a horizontal line.

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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

1. (Amended) A collapsible container comprising:

a base member;

at least one support member for supporting an object placed in the container, the at least one support member rotatably connected with the base member for articulating the container between an essentially flat configuration and an extended configuration; and

means for bearing a load exerted by the at least one support member when an object is placed in the container while in the extended configuration, the means for bearing a load comprising at least one hook having an open end affixed to at least one of the support members and adapted to resist movement of the at least one support member in a direction caused by the load wherein the at least one hook receives a respective one of the at least one support member when the container is in the extended configuration.

4. (Amended) The collapsible container of claim [3] 1, the at least one hook comprising a plurality of hooks wherein one of the hooks is affixed to alternating support members and adapted to receive a portion of an adjacent support member when the container is in the extended configuration.

5. (Amended) The collapsible container of claim [2,] 1 further comprising a plurality of support members, the base member comprising a circular rim, the plurality of support members being circumferentially disposed on the rim, each of the support members having a first distal end and a second distal end connecting the support member to the rim, the support members being disposed so that one of the distal ends of a support member overlaps with one of the distal ends of an adjacent support member.

6. (Amended) The collapsible container of claim [2] 1 further comprising:

a plurality of stoppers circumferentially disposed on the rim, the stoppers adapted to prevent movement of the plurality of support members outside a predetermined area; and

means for hanging the container.

7. (Amended) The collapsible container of claim 1:

the base member comprising a substantially planar back plate adapted to be mounted to a flat surface;

the at least one support member comprising a first arcuate brace and a second arcuate brace rotatably connected to the back plate, at least one depending support member each having a proximal end and a distal end, the proximal end rotatably connecting the depending support member to the first arcuate brace and the distal end being adapted to releasably engage the back plate; and

the means for bearing a load [comprises] comprising at least one hook having an open end affixed to at least one of the depending support members, the hook adapted to receive a portion of the second arcuate brace when the container is in the extended configuration.

8. (Amended) The collapsible container of claim 1:

the base member comprising a substantially planar frame;

the [plurality of support members] at least one support member comprising a first side frame, a second side frame, a first end frame and a second end frame; and

the means for bearing a load comprising at least one hook affixed to at least one of the support members, the hook adapted to receive a portion of one of the support members when the container is in the extended configuration.

10. (Amended) The collapsible container of claim 7 further comprising three depending support members, [the distal end of each] the means for bearing a load further comprising a hook affixed to a respective distal end of at least one of the three depending support members and adapted to releasably engage a corresponding aperture in the back plate, wherein the [first brace, the second brace and the] depending support members are curvilinear.

17. (Amended) The collapsible container of claim 11:

the base member comprising a substantially planar back plate adapted to be mounted to a flat surface; and

the plurality of support members comprising a first arcuate support member rotatably connected with the back plate for articulating the first arcuate support member between a position that is in substantially the same plane defined by the back plate and a position that is substantially perpendicular to the back plate.

20. (Amended) The collapsible container of claim 11:

the base member comprising a substantially planar and rectangular frame;

the plurality of support members comprising a first side frame, a second side frame, a first end frame and a second end frame; and

wherein the at least one hook is affixed to an upper end of at least one of the plurality of support members and wherein the container forms a substantially rectangular box when in the extended configuration.